

Lippitt-Green House
14 John Street
Providence
Providence County
Rhode Island

HABS No. RI-223

An addendum to
Green-Arnold House
14 John Street
Providence, Rhode Island
in HABS Catalog (1941)

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

LIPPITT-GREEN HOUSE

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Address: 14 John Street, Providence, Providence County,
Rhode Island.

Present Owner: Industrial National Bank, Ronald C Green and
Arnold J. Green, in trust.

Present Occupant: Senator Theodore Francis Green.

Present Use: Residence.

Brief Statement
of Significance: Built c. 1610, this is one of several large, brick
houses in Providence, and has been in the family
of Senator Green since 1866.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners:

- 1796 William Ashton, sailmaker, quit claims to two sons William Ashton jr and Stephen Ashton a lot of land on the N side of John Street, bounded: S by John Street 50'; E by John I Clark 125'; N by Williams Thayer; E by Ashton 125';. - Deed Book 25, page 140, in Providence City Hall. Also lots #4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, and 22.
- 1802 William Ashton, yeoman, sells for \$440 to Moses Lippitt, merchant a certain lot of land bounded N by Rebecca Williams, E by Ashton 125'; S by John Street 40'; W by Ashton 125';. - Deed Book 28, page 335, in Providence City Hall.
- 1803 William Ashton jr, sailmaker, sells for \$550 to Moses Lippitt a certain lot of land bounded: S by John Street 50'; W by Lippitt formerly Ashton 125'; E by gangway 125'. - Deed Book 28, page 334, in Providence City Hall.

- 1803 William Ashton, yeoman, sells for \$368.50 to Moses Lippitt, merchant, a certain lot of land bounded: W by Rebekah Williams 125'; N by Rebecca Williams; E by Moses Lippitt 125'; S by John Street 33-1/2'. - Deed Book 29, page 111, in Providence City Hall.
- 1812 Moses Lippitt, merchant, sells for \$10,215.59 to Samuel G Arnold and Cyrus Butler and Samuel Butler, under the firm name of Samuel Butler and Son a certain lot of land with DWELLING HOUSE with barn and wood-house and other improvements on the Hill S/ly part of Providence and are the lots purchased at several times of William Ashton. - Deed Book 37, page 21, in Providence City Hall.
- 1814 Providence Direct Tax List (to pay for war of 1812) Samuel Arnold - 1 lot of land S by John St. 112-1/2' back 125', E by gangway (now Neighbor's Lane), a Dwelling House, two story, brick, also barn, wood house, etc. occupied by Moses Lippett. - Mss. tax description in the Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, for the 1814 Providence direct tax to the federal government.
- 1823 Fire Record #2432, Samuel G Arnold N side of John St Brick and stone 45' square, rear addition 20 x 15 two stories high, roof shingles laid in mortar barn and wood house, barn 40x22, two stories, wood house 39 x 16 one story, wood, with N side of brick. Adjoins barn.
- 1830 POLICY RECORD: Frances R Arnold, widow, and heirs of Samuel Arnold...Brick and stone. The WHOLE two stories high in front and rear..45' square. Addition 20' x 15'. The whole roof covered with shingles laid in mortar, occupied as a Dwelling House. Also barn 22' x 40'...2 stories high..N side of brick. Wood House 29' x 16'...N and W side of brick..1 story high except small part 2 stories high. Mss. fire insurance records of the Providence Mutual Insurance Co. at the Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, R. I., Vol. 7, policy #4281.
- About
- 1850 Third story, portico, and steps added.
- 1854 Samuel G. Arnold heirs
- 1865 Samuel G Arnold quit claims to Cornelia A Greene one undivided 1/2 part to a lot of land with all buildings and improvements. Bounded: N by Harriot Brown; Carlile heirs, and H E Barney; E by gangway (Neighbors' Lane) W by grantee and Harriot Brown;

S by John Street being Lot #241 Plat 16 on the Assessors' Plat...the property inherited in 1826 by Cornelia (Arnold) Greene and Samuel G Arnold from their Father Samuel G Arnold. - Deed Book 172, page 376, in Providence City Hall.

1866 Cornelia E Green

1898 Property was taxed to the Cornelia Green Estate and to the following persons in the year designated:

1903 Arnold Green Estate

1916 Theodore Francis Green

1958 Industrial National Bank, Ronald C Green and Arnold J Green, in trust.

2. Date of erection: From the deeds, the house was apparently built between 1803 and 1812 for Moses Lippitt. It is traditionally dated c. 1810.
3. Notes on alterations and additions: The house was originally two stories high. The third story, and the present portico with curving double flights of stairs were added c. 1850. The one-story library wing on the northeast was added later.
4. Sources of information: Antoinette Forrester Downing, Early Homes of Rhode Island (Richmond, Virginia: Garrett and Massie, 1937), pp. 355, 361, 363, 367, 381, 382.

HABI form prepared by John Hutchins Cady, November 19, 1956.

Prepared by Antoinette F. Downing and Elvira Gowdey
for the Providence Preservation Society
August 1962.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: Built c. 1810 with later additions, this is one of several large brick houses in this area from this period. Originally a two-story house, the third story and the entrance porch were added about 1850. The house preserves original interior details--particularly the stairs, mantels and doorways--that are very refined and delicate. It is furnished with several

generations of family things.

2. Condition of fabric; Good.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: 45' square (five bays). Originally two stories, third added later. Faces south. Later, one-story wing at northeast with large library.
2. Foundations: Brownstone ashlar.
3. Wall construction: Brick - common bond. Brownstone quoins and belt course between second and third stories.
4. Porches, stoops: Later one-story wood entrance porch. Paired Ionic columns at the corners on brownstone foundation with iron railings. Double curved flights of stairs.
5. Chimneys: Four chimneys; one in east wall, one in west wall, and two in rear wall of main block.
6. Openings;
 - a. Doors and doorways: Six-panel wood door, simple unrelieved doorway with top light.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Six over six light double hung windows, splayed brownstone lintels, adjustable louvered shutters. Three over three light windows on later third floor with segmental heads.
7. Roof:
 - a. Shape. Low hip roof.
 - b. Cornice: Deep projecting cornice, heavy detail, modillions, denticulated bed mold, moldings have Roman profiles.

B. Technical Description of Interior

1. Floor plans: Central hall, four-room plan. Double parlors on east, dining room at southwest, kitchen at northwest. Later library and living rooms at northeast. Bedrooms on upper floors in similar arrangement.
2. Stairways: Main stair in central hall U-shape with landings, open string, open well, delicate detail, sawn scroll step ends, three rectangular balusters per step, molded hand rail, round newels. Back stairs, U-shape, enclosed, winders.

3. Flooring: Wide board floors.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster.
5. Doorways and doors: Eight-panel doors on third floor. Six-panel doors on second and first, black walnut on first. First floor doorways have double molded architraves and broken pediments on principal rooms.
6. Trim: Plaster ceiling cornices, deep undercut profiles on third floor. Folding paneled shutters on all rooms. Delicate paneled wainscoting in some rooms, central hall and stairway.
7. Hardware: Mortise locks, butt hinges.
8. Lighting: Electric.
9. Heating: Central. Two-story wood mantel in rear parlor with paneled, pedimented overmantel. Other first floor mantels have later round-headed marble mantels. Second and third floor mantels - wood, one-story mantels, some with paired colonettes at the corners.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: Faces south, lot elevated above sidewalk, garden on three sides.
2. Enclosures: Iron fence on brownstone foundation at the front.
3. Walks, driveways: Double brownstone, curved steps lead to entrance porch.
4. Outbuildings: Courtyard and barns at north, rear, of lot.
5. Landscaping: Informal gardens with lawn, trees, shrubs, flowers.

Prepared by Osmund R. Overby, Architect
National Park Service
May 1962.